



Toys bound for Florida hurricane victims, all donated by RARS members. Thank you RARS! (Article on page 5.)

The Exciter

The ***Exciter*** is the monthly newsletter of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society. It is available in both printed and electronic form. The printed version is mailed to members just before each club meeting. The electronic form, in Adobe Acrobat PDF format, is e-mailed about a week earlier.

We solicit both articles and advertising. The deadline for submissions is first Friday of the month or Friday after the monthly meeting. Contact the Editor.

The views contained in the *Exciter* are those of the individual authors, and are not necessarily the views of the Editor, or the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society.

The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society

The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society, Inc. (RARS) was founded in 1969 and continues to serve and support the Amateur Radio community in the greater Triangle area. In 1999, we incorporated a new RARS, and obtained 501(c)(3) Non-Profit tax status.

The objectives of the club are to promote worldwide friend-ship through Amateur Radio; to be of public service by providing radio communications in times of disaster, emergency, or civic need; to educate members in radio technique; and to provide training classes to assist in obtaining Amateur Radio licenses.

Anyone interested in Amateur Radio is eligible to apply for membership. Dues for regular licensed amateurs are \$18.00 per year (from July 1 through June 30). Additional immediate family members pay \$5.00 each per year. Dues for licensed amateurs older than 59 or younger than 16 are \$12.00 per year. Dues for non-licensed Associate members are \$9.00 per year.

Applications for membership may be obtained from the treasurer, or the RARS web site (www.rars.org).

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RARS Repeaters in Raleigh:
145.13 (82.5 PL)
146.64
224.64 (Temporarily off the air)
444.525 (82.5 PL)

WEB SITE www.rars.org



PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS



Luckily this year we were snow and ice free for the January meeting. I believe the last couple years

either the Raleigh area, or myself personally have been held up by winter weather the first week of January. It was nice to see a good crowd out to be blown away by K4JVP's severe weather footage -- HI HI. Now we can say we've been through our first, and hopefully last, hurricane landfall.

For those of you who weren't around to hear Jim K4FIJ's report on delivering the Toy Drive goods to Florida, you'll have a chance to read up on it in this issue. I'd like to once again thank everyone who helped out, and for Jim and Denyse who got to help Santa by hand-delivering our collection. We all know hams can do some amazing technical things, and it's great that we get a chance every now and then to do amazing "human things" as well. 73, Andy.

The Exciter goes to the printer the first Monday after the general meeting. Electronic mailing is the same week. Printing and mailing may vary.

RALEIGH AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY MEETINGS

Date: **Every first Tuesday of the Month**
Location: **Forest Hills Baptist Church, at Dixie Trail and Clark Avenue, in Raleigh**
Time: **7:30pm. Folks start showing up a bit before 7 to chat, brag and eat donuts.**

VE Testing: The RARS VEs will accept walk-in testing at the February, May, August and November RARS meetings, at the RARSfest in April, the Cary Swapfest in July and the JARSfest in November, and following RARS license classes. Please bring a photo ID, the original and a copy of your current license, plus any CSCEs you have for credit. Please refer to www.rars.org for more information.

The RARS 145.13 Repeater is waiting for YOU! PL 82.5 Tone

Announcements

NEXT RARS MEETING:
February 1, 2005
Program: Handi-Hams Experience

HELP NEEDED FOR THIS EVENT

Odyssey of the Mind Tournament on Saturday, March 5 at East Wake High School.
Contact Dick, KD4ISC at:
kd4isc@arrl.net.

RARSFEST, April 17, 2005

We are signing up people for RARS Fest. If anyone could work a couple hours for the club, please email Hank at, k4hm@arrl.net.



RARS DINNER

Come join us on the **2nd** Tuesday of each month. We are currently meeting in the private dining room at the Golden Corral, 6129 Glenwood Avenue. People start arriving around 6:30 P.M., and things usually wind down by 8 P.M. or so. You can come whenever it's convenient for you. This gathering is open to anyone, RARS and non-RARS members, adults and children alike. Hope to see you there.

NET REPORTS FOR JANUARY 2005

8:00PM DAILY: RARS Evening Net

Participants 501

Traffic 29/25

Time 695 minutes

Sessions 31

8:30PM SAT: Tech & Traders Net

9:00PM MON: SWL/SIG

Participants 55

Traffic 0/0

Time 337 Minutes

Sessions 8

HAMFEST CALENDAR

February 5	Charleston ARS, SC
February 26	Elkin, NC
February 20	Richmond, VA Frostfest
March 6	Kinston, NC
March 12-13	Charlotte, NC
March 26??	Elkin, NC
April 9	Chesapeake, VA
April 16	Morganton, NC
April 17th Raleigh, NC--RARSFEST	
May 20-22	Dayton, OH
May 21	Williamston, NC
May 28*	Durham, NC
June 11	Winston-Salem, NC
June 25-26	FIELD DAY

Courtesy of the SERA Repeater Journal

*Date is not confirmed



LOOKing Back 30 Years

Taken from the February 1975 Exciter

Oscar 7's launch was perfect, and it ended up where it was supposed to be when it was supposed to be there. Both telemetry beacons are working perfectly, and the only hitch is a marked lack of sensitivity in the 2-10-meter translator. The 432 MHz to 2 meter translator, on the other hand, is working much better than expected. Predictions were that 350 W effective radiated power would be required for a consistent signal throughout it, and it's doing so well that a maximum of 80 W ERP is being requested.



LOOKing Back 10 Years

Taken from the February 1995 Exciter

Further liberalization of the rules concerning automatic packet radio message forwarding will not happen in the foreseeable future. The FCC is denying request for reconsideration of a decision concerning message forwarding system in the Amateur Service.

About RARS Members



Name - Selene Montgomery

Call Sign - KG4RMT

Residence - Allanbrooke Lane, Fuquay Varina, NC

When did you become a ham and why - I got my novice license in the 70's when my husband was teaching the class. Our daughters and I took the class as a family activity. I only made one contact via CW and didn't have much interest after that. I became a technician in February of 2002 and got my general class license in August of 2002.

My reason for entering the hobby again was a combination of interest in two-meter activity, having the time to learn and be active, and sharing fun times with my husband and new-found friends via ham radio.

My main interest is two-meter and 440. I use a Yeasu VX 150 HT and a Yeasu FT 470 HT, as well as a ICOM 208H radio as the base station. I enjoy going to hamfests and helping with public service events.

I have HF and CW privileges, but have not gotten involved in that area yet.

What contests do you enter. I don't do ham contesting.

What is your hobby besides ham radio:

Another hobby is entering sweepstakes (not the ham radio type - the prize giveaway type). I enjoy reading, and watching baseball.

Other information:

I've been married to Hank Montgomery, K4HM, for 38 years. We have 5 children (one 18-year-old still lives at home), and 10 grandchildren. I'm originally from Louisville, Ky, and we've also lived in the Birmingham, AL area twice, and Hermitage, TN. My career has been a stay-at-home mom for most of the time. Since our family is not close by, the people we have met through ham radio are the next best thing.



FEBRUARY MEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Maury	WW4MC	02/02
Salene	KG4RMT	02/03
Art	W2JNW	02/06
Larry	N4LEW	02/07
Martin	KA1LXG	02/08
Carl	KU4HM	02/09
Buddy	KD4PCD	02/10
Harriette	KF4SER	02/10
Jim	K4HCG	02/12
Dennis	K4DAM	02/13
Bob	AG4OP	02/13
Mike	K1MW	02/14
Roy	KT4EM	02/15
John	KG4SWI	02/15
Keith	N4QQH	02/16
Rex	KI4GNA	02/18
Howard	K3EPN	02/19
Mike	AF4WY	02/19
John	KB4IP	02/21
Israel	N4ZVU	02/21
Herb	KG4AWE	02/23
Joseph	W4TTO	02/25
Bob	WX4MMM	02/26
Tom	WA4OTA	02/27
Hans	W2UF	02/27
Mary	KG4OQA	02/28

WHITE DOVES PROJECT

By Jim K4FIJ

We were headed south on I-95 on a Christmas mission, not in a sleigh with eight reindeer but a 5-year old car with a trunk full of toys. Destination, Florida... the location of much disaster and heartache during the summer of 2004 as four hurricanes ravaged the state. Many families lost their homes and are still living in temporary quarters or with friends or relatives. The United Way White Doves Project of Martin County was collecting toys for the children of these displaced and needy families, and my wife Denyse K4DAW, and I were on our way to deliver toys that were donated by the generous and good-hearted hams of RARS. A little background...

The amateur radio community distinguished itself during the storms by conducting nets and coordinating storm reports on the IRLP for the National Hurricane Center. But when the ARRL heard about the White Doves Project, they knew that hams could do more. So they got involved by putting out the word to all hams nationwide: toys are needed! Such a worthy project... to bring some much needed joy to children who might otherwise have a sad Christmas. The plea was for all hams to buy a new toy for a boy or girl and mail it, along with a QSL card, to Stuart, Florida where the United Way set up the White Doves Project distribution point. But we thought RARS could do better! Why not conduct a local toy drive and deliver them all in one load? So we put the word out on local nets, and the word definitely got around. At two monthly RARS meetings almost 150 toys were collected, enough to solidly pack the trunk of our car. So, always looking for an excuse to go to Florida during the winter, we headed south.

As we left I-95 at Stuart, we immediately saw that there still was a lot of storm damage in the area; many blue tarps on roofs, and a lot of bare trees, the leaves stripped by the high winds. As we entered the Martin County Fairgrounds we located a warehouse with a white sign over the large doors, "White Doves Project." Diane Tomasik and two of her assistants were there to greet us. We were given a tour of the facility and were very moved to see over two thousand toys neatly arranged on long tables, sorted according to age and gender. (Not all were donated by hams; the Marine Corps also participated through their Toys For Tots program.) In another room, 120 brand new bicycles lined up on one wall, and approximately 1,400 grocery bags of food on the another wall. All to be given to needy families. But what made us proud almost to the point of tears was a special display that Diane showed us. On one wall was a large U.S. map that had QSL cards and pins on each state of every ham that sent a donation. We had brought a photo of our December RARS meeting, and Diane pinned it right over the state of North Carolina.

We unloaded the toys and gave Diane the stack of QSL cards to send to the ARRL. And we thought about how wonderful it would be to be there on Dec 20 and 21 to witness the distribution of the toys. But alas, it was time to leave. Diane and her crew had great things to say about the amateur radio community and specifically asked us to express their gratitude to every one of you who donated toys and checks.

Denyse and I also would like to offer a big "thank you."

Hams are known for being there when needed, but you definitely went the extra mile. Through your extreme generosity many needy children had smiles on their faces on Christmas morning. Well done RARS!

For further details, go to:

www.martinvolunteers.org/whitedoves To see great a video, go to: www.newflorida.org, click on the Dec 23rd program.



Shannon & Diane with RARS-donated toys.



Toys for the children in hurricane damaged Florida. Tables are arranged by age and gender.



1,400 bags of food on the left and bikes to the right.



Diane pinning RARS picture on the board

50 YEARS WITH ARRL



Art Katz W2JNW. Art's now an Extra, but for most of his ham career he's been a Tech, dating back to the early 50's. He received his Tech license when it was first available, and must have held one of the oldest Tech licenses left before he upgraded. He has been with ARRL for 50 years.

EXTRA LICENSE CLASS

The Smith Chart Amateur Radio Society, K4OO announces an Amateur Extra License Class. The class begins Monday March 7, 2005, from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM and meets every Monday night through May 16. The VE test session in Smithfield is the following Saturday, May 21, 2005.

The fee for the class is \$25.00 and includes the ARRL Extra Class License Manual, 8th edition that will be used as the text. If you already have a book, there is no charge for the class, just let me know that you want to attend but you already have the book.

The class will be held at the Knightdale Fire Station #1 at the intersection of Poole and Clifton Roads. From the I-440 Poole Road exit, take Poole Road east approximately 4.5 miles. The station will be on your left.

Pre-registration is required for this class. I must have your class fee (\$25.00) by Feb 21, 2005 so that the training materials can be ordered. In the event that we don't have enough pre-registrations to hold the class the class fee will be refunded.

To pre-register send checks payable to:

Frank A. Lynch, W4FAL
2528 Oakes Plantation Drive
Raleigh, NC 27610-9328
919-740-3957 (Cell)
919-905-2934 (Work)
w4fal@arrl.net

General Meeting for January 2005

The January meeting of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society was conducted on January 4, 2005 at the Forest Hills Baptist Church located on Dixie Trail. Members gathered and enjoyed doughnuts and refreshments prior to the official start of the meeting.

President Andy Peterson, NI4S, called the meeting to order at 7:33 pm.

Jeff Wittich, AC4ZO, was given the floor and offered recently acquired fruitcake to the group. His offer was met with applause.

Jim Walter, K4FIJ, was recognized and provided a report of the delivery of toys (collected at the last two RARS meetings) to the White Dove Project in Stuart, Florida. He advised that he and Denyse, K4DAW, had a good trip to Florida and described the many toys, bikes and QSL cards gathered at the collection site. Gary Pearce, KN4AQ, followed up with information about a public television program produced in Florida that provided good coverage of amateur radio and its role in the White Dove Toy Project. Information on viewing the program via the internet will be placed on the RARS website.

Gene Armistead, AI4GV, Henry Heller, WB2AGA and Tom (ham in progress) were welcomed as guests to the meeting. Sandy Gerli, AC1Y, was welcomed as a returning member to RARS now that he has moved back to North Carolina.

The following announcements were made:

- Bob Breyer, K1RCB, provided a handout about upcoming CERT training opportunities in Raleigh. Several members have completed this training and anyone interested is encouraged to attend one of the training sessions in January, February, or March.
- Andy NI4S, announced the Peter I DXpedition will take place on January 14 through February 10. He made a chart package with details available for members to view after the meeting.
- Tim Buehlmann, W4TIM, noted his recent appearance in QST in an article on the School Club Roundup. He provided basic information on what is takes to offer amateur radio opportunities to students in our schools and encouraged others to get involved.
- Andy, NI4S, announced that the Smith Chart Society will be offering an Amateur Extra license class beginning on March 7 and continuing through May 16 (every Monday, 7-9 pm). Those interested should contact Frank Lynch, W4FAL, via his email address: w4fal@arrl.net.
- Jeff, AC4ZO, reported that Jack Smith, KE4YHR, had completed the basic and advanced NTS traffic training offered by RARS. While displaying Jack's certificate, Jeff encouraged those interested in traffic training to check in to the 8 pm RARS two meter net for details.

(Continued on page 8)

Wake-Durham SET Challenges Area Hams By Gary Pearce, Wake ARES PIO

(Part 2 of the SET from November 20, 2004)

Tornados, flooding, EOC evacuations, multiple repeater failures and simplex operation highlighted the 2004 combined Wake-Durham ARES Simulated Emergency Test (SET) on Saturday morning, November 20. If you tuned in late and didn't hear anything, that's probably why. The action was fast and furious, if you knew where to listen.

Only a few key people knew in advance the scenario developed by Wake County EC Tom Brown N4TAB and Durham County EC John LeMay KB4WGA. I wasn't one of them. Tom had announced that the exercise would rely on simplex and crossband repeating, but didn't add any details.

I tuned into the 146.88 repeater at the scheduled 9 AM start time to find the operation already underway, with KB4WGA reporting a tornado touchdown in Durham County. I decided to act as scribe, to monitor and take notes on as much as I could, and not to intercede in the actual operation. It turns out that this taxed my station, which can monitor two HF and five VHF or UHF frequencies at once (more if you count HT's), and my ears, which can't monitor 5 frequencies at once if they're all active. And in this test, sometimes they were. So I missed a few things, but I think I caught the essence of the test.

I'll give you the play-by-play. I'll say upfront that I hope no one is offended if I include something that seems critical of their operation. We learn as much or more from the things that go wrong as we do from the things that go right. I'll try to include both. I have nothing but praise for everyone's participation. Thank you for taking time from your weekend to join this activity!

After announcing the start of the drill with the tornado touchdown at 8:58 AM, KB4WGA moved to Durham's 145.45 repeater and began an ARES net. Virginia NC4VA started a SKYWARN net on 88. Then I logged my first critical comment – minutes had gone by with a lot of dire weather warnings and nary a “this is just a drill” to be heard since the initial broadcast. Denyse K4DAW later reported that she was running errands with her mother and just tuned in for a few minutes. Her mom was very concerned about all the tornados, and in the time they were listening, nobody said “drill.” Finally N4TAB said it. Meanwhile, the check-ins started rolling in on the Durham 45 machine. N4TAB appeared there to see if they needed Wake ARES assistance.

9:06- KB4WGA asks if there were any Durham AEC's who could begin the telephone call tree. Jerry KI4CCB says he could do it. (Great to have a bunch of new “KI4” hams involved. Many of you guys just eat this kind of activity up!)

9:07- KB4WGA reports a tornado touchdown at a school near the Wake County line. He asks for a SKYWARN liaison, and KD4KVG volunteers from Fayetteville. Sterling had a fairly weak signal into the 45 repeater, but he holds up OK while relaying information back and forth from the 88 SKYWARN operation.

9:11 – KB4WGA asks for volunteers to go to the school hit

by the tornado. At first, there's no response. Finally N4SVC volunteers and heads out. On 88, WX4MMM reports a funnel cloud in north Wake County.

9:13 – N4TAB asks on 88 if anyone can travel to the Wake County EOC. K4RLC and KF4UQZ respond. K4RLC is dispatched.

9:18 – KD4SLQ appears on the 145.39 (82.5 tone) repeater asking if Wake ARES is active. WA4MJF replies that Wake ARES is on 146.88. But the 88 repeater has just gone down. Later we learn that K4ITL turned it off as part of the exercise. Stations are supposed to move to 145.39 as the primary backup. A few do. There's no way for me to tell how many of the ARES hams on 88 have missed the cue or don't know to switch to 39, since there's no roll call.

9:19 – KB4WGA asks for a volunteer to take over NCS on 45. A station offers, but says he isn't familiar with this net's protocols. John accepts him anyway and says “just take check-ins.” KI4CCD reports no other ARC's available from the call tree. Another ham volunteers to help with the all-members” telephone call-up. They split the list and go to work.

9:24 – So far, nobody within range of my station has used 146.88 simplex to announce the move to 145.39 for those who either don't know to move, or don't realize the repeater is down.

9:25 – N4TAB announces that Wake ARES is mobilizing to support Durham ARES, and is moving to 147.195 (88.5 tone) to leave 145.39 clear for SKYWARN, which has been receiving simulated storm and damage reports. A few stations begin to appear on 195, while Virginia NC4VA starts a SKYWARN net on 39.

9:27 – One of the Durham call-tree volunteers has been confused about which list he's supposed to be using. KB4WGA gets him on the right track.

9:28 – N4TAB informs Durham ARES that 88 is down, and ARES/SKYWARN activity is split between 39 and 195. Mark N4MQU begins taking ARES check-ins on 195 using the NC4WC Wake County ARES callsign.

9:33 – KB4WGA asks for a Durham volunteer to travel to a Rougemont command post. No takers.

9:37 – N4TAB asks N4MQU if he can redeploy to the Wake County EOC. Mark says he can, and Liz KF4UQZ picks up net control on 195.

9:38 – Ronnie WA4MJF talks to N4TAB on 146.64, informing him that he can't operate on 147.195. Ronnie's running a commercial radio that doesn't have that frequency programmed. As Tom is telling Ronnie to remain on 64, I turn the 64 repeater off in an unscripted move. Tom calls me on the phone and applauds.

9:43 – the 145.39 repeater goes off the air, courtesy of K4ITL. KB4WGA announces on 45 that the Durham EOC has been destroyed by a tornado, and communications is being relocated, using the new DFMA mobile communications unit (MCU).

9:44 – the 147.195 repeater goes down, also courtesy of K4ITL. Wake County is in radio silence, with 88, 39, 64 and 195 all off the air. KF4UQZ calls for any stations on 195 simplex.

(Continued on page 9)

General Meeting (Continued from page 6)

- Dick Orander, KD4ISC, reported that our first public service event for 2005 is on the calendar. The Odyssey of the Mind tournament will be held on Saturday, March 5 at the East Wake High School in Wendell. Hams are needed for communications support for this event. More details will be provided as they become available. Look for announcements via the email group, the 8 pm net and next meeting. To volunteer, contact Dick at: kd4isc@arrl.net.

Treasurer's Report:

Greg Seamster, KE4PAX, reported there were 244 members

Program:

Denyse, K4DAW, was given the floor and introduced John Van Pelt, K4JVP, as our guest for the evening program. Before beginning his presentation, John announced that Denyse is now the new Skywarn EC for Central Carolina Skywarn. He then shared his photos and videos of tornado storm chasing and first hand experiences with the hurricanes of 2004.

Door Prizes were won by W4VFJ and KE4DST.

Attendance - 48

Meeting adjourned at 9:23 pm.

Dick Orander

RARS Secretary

HF CONTEST CORNER

February 2005

Feb 5-6 Vermont QSO Party	0000Z-2400Z
Feb 5-6 10-10 Int Winter Contest, SSB	0001Z-2359Z
Feb 5-6 YL-ISSB QSO Party	1100Z—1700Z
Feb 5 Minnesota QSO Party	1400Z-2400Z
Feb 5-7 YLRL YL-OM Contest CW	1400Z-0200Z
Feb 5 AGCW Straight Key, Party	1600Z-1900Z
Feb 5-6 Delaware QSO Party	1700Z-0500Z
Feb 7 Delaware QSO Party	1300Z-0100Z
Feb 6 North Amer Sprint, SSB	0000Z-0400Z
Feb 13 Louisiana QSO Party	1500Z-0300Z
Feb 13 North Amer Sprint, CW	0000Z-0400Z
Feb 19-20 ARRL Inter DX Contest, CW	0000Z-2400Z
Feb 20-21 CQC Winter QSO Party	2200Z-0359Z
Feb 26-27 CQ 160-Meter Contest, SSB	0600Z-2359Z
Feb 26-27 Mississippi QSO Party	1500Z-0300Z
Feb 27-28 North Carolina QSO Party	1700Z-0300Z

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relax; **docu**source it.

(SET Continued from page 7)

AE4MY announces that Wake ARES is moving to 146.52 simplex. A few operators begin to appear there. Liz announces on 195 simplex that operators should go to the 2nd backup, 146.64, and is told that 64 is also down, so move to 52 simplex. Note that there is no listed Wake County ARES simplex channel.

9:53 – more stations appear on 52, amid some doubling and confusion as not all stations can hear each other. There is no net control yet. Vaden N4DIL appears with a big signal on 52 from south Raleigh and relays some traffic between N4MQU and N4TAB.

9:59 – NC4VA has moved the SKYWARN net to the KD4RAA/K4JDR linked UHF system, where it remains until the end of the exercise. Few stations appear there. A station I will not name calls me on the phone to ask for help unlocking his radio, which he somehow accidentally locked. That sends me scrambling through manuals until I find the cryptic key sequence that does the job.

10:01 – KB4WGA announces that the 145.45 repeater has failed, and Durham ARES is moving to 146.52. John announces this on the 45 repeater, which is actually still working and is never really turned off. The Wake repeaters were actually turned off for a short time, which risks their unavailability for an actual emergency, but simulates the problem of repeater failure more accurately.

10:04 – N4TAB notes that N4DIL has the best 52 simplex signal in Wake County. Vaden says this is his first ARES activity, so he's not all that sure what he needs to do. Meanwhile, here he is in the spotlight as the one station everyone can hear, and he relays messages between stations who are out of simplex range of each other.

Come to think of it, there are precious few strong simplex signals appearing. Later, many operators will note that they do not have effective simplex base stations. I suspect antenna restrictions are a key factor. I'm able to hear some of the Durham simplex stations appearing on 52. The channel is becoming busy and I hear a fair number of collisions. N4TAB asks David KF4VXJ to relay a message to Bob K4RLC to meet him on 40 meters, 7210 kHz. David replies that Bob lost his 40 meter antenna and will need to meet Tom on 80 meters, 3927 kHz. I tune my HF rig, adding yet another speaker to the mix. Tom and Bob hook up with good signals on HF. Tom is heading to the Central Branch EOC in Butler.

I'll pause here to note that there are many other Wake, Durham and surrounding county repeaters still working. We're pretty much ignoring them, as the edict was to move to simplex. Would operators know how to find them, set their tones and operate through them if needed?

10:07- N4TAB announces that the Wake County EOC in downtown Raleigh is flooded, and is being evacuated to the Wake County Commons complex on Poole Rd.

10:10 – KB4WGA arrives at the temporary Durham EOC at Durham County Stadium, and starts setting up the DFMA mobile communications unit (MCU). He announces that the Durham simplex net will move to 146.535 to avoid the conflict with Wake County on 52. N4DIL relays the move to Wake ARES stations. N4MQU asks N4DIL if he could use some help, and heads to DIL's home.

At this point, I still have no idea how many operators are out in the cold, having lost their connection through area repeaters, and either don't have enough antenna to participate on simplex,

or just don't know what frequency to tune. A few stations are checking in on simplex, maybe more of them in Durham than in Wake. A station in Hillsborough comes up on the still-working 145.45 repeater and asks where the activity went. He's told "535" and asks "where's that." He's told it's 146.535 simplex. He switches over, but is able to hear few stations from that distance.

10:17- KB4WGA is having trouble with intermod from a powerful paging transmitter on the Durham hospital just down the street. He's having intermittent trouble hearing some stations on simplex, either 52 or 535.

10:21- Somewhere in here, Ronnie WA4MJF and his wife Sherry KB4EXL take their personally-financed and built mobile com unit to Wake County Commons to set up emergency communications. KF4VXJ is dispatched to help. Vaden N4DIL is fried, and asks Liz KF4UQZ to take over as 52 net control in Wake. Liz picks it up, but doesn't have nearly the coverage Vaden did

10:22- K4ITL turns the 88, 39 and 195 repeaters back on, and I turn 64 back on at about 10:30. No one notices for a long time, and when some stations appear and ask where the activity is, they are directed to simplex. No one thinks to pull the operation back to the repeaters. This is not surprising – most operators are assuming the repeaters are still "off for the drill." But that had not been specified as part of the operation. In real activations in the past, I've seen repeaters go down, operation shift to less desirable facilities, and not move back because no one was checking to see if the main repeater was back up. The lesson: check the repeaters now and then!

10:24- KB4WGA has the Durham MCU up and running. Still getting intermod, but is in contact with his field stations.

10:31- Durham MCU tries to reach any Wake ARES official on 52. No answer. KK4PH tries to relay with a better signal into Wake County, but still no answer. Am I the only one hearing them? I'm declining to intervene, but I do slip down to 40 meters and cue N4TAB to listen to this failure. Liz KF4UQZ hears me and spills the beans on 52. Now N4DIL is hearing KK4PH, but thought others were hearing them OK. He relays that KK4PH wants a test of Wake-Durham communications, and tells Liz to switch to 535 and call Durham EOC.

This was a problem. Liz lives in southeastern Wake County. She has a nice home station, but can't reach the Durham MCU on simplex. Meanwhile, I notice another problem. 52 and 535 are only 15 kHz apart. That's not good enough to avoid adjacent channel interference, and I'm getting hit by N4DIL's strong signal while trying to listen to the Durham activity on 535. Later, AE4MY would report he was having the same problem. The solution will be for simplex stations to avoid the "15 kHz splits," with Durham ARES picking another frequency. Wake ARES might find something better than 52, the National Simplex Frequency, as well.

10:40- N4TAB moves the HF activity from 80 to 40 meters, on 7210 kHz. 7232 is the published 40 meter NC ARES frequency, but it was busy

10:45- N4MQU arrives at N4DIL and activates the station as NC4WC. He makes contact with the Durham MCU, amid some doubling with other stations trying to check in.

(Continued on page 10)

(SET Continued from page 9)

He tries to get KB4EXL at Wake Commons to contact the Durham MCU on 52, but I can hear that Durham has switched back to 535. I keep silent.

10:53- K4RLC dispatched to Wake County Commons to assist. Gets directions on 52. Later, a station will suggest that all the direction-giving should have been done on another frequency.

A very good point. But I've seen over the years that we do not have much coordination of simplex frequencies besides 52 (and don't really have a lock on that). Changing frequencies often sends one or both stations off to a black hole from which they sometimes never emerge.

10:56- KF4VXJ announces that the Wake Co. Commons MCU can't reach the Durham MCU on simplex. NC4WC says there's a lot of doubling and tripling on 52, and stations should go through net control.. K4RLC is still getting directions to the Commons.

11:02- N4TAB calls NC4WC on 52 and announces that he's arrived in Butner. NC4WC asks him to call the Wake MCU. They can't make contact. NC4VA is still holding down the fort for SKYWARN on the UHF link system. WX4MMM and one or two other stations are all that check in.

11:07- NC4WC repeatedly calls for N4TAB on 52, but TAB is on 535 talking to Durham MCU.

11:08- Mike WA4BPJ checks in on 52. NC4WC asks him to sweep for more check-ins. Mike does, but no replies. Too bad Mike hasn't been around earlier. He's got a great simplex station

in North Raleigh and would have added a lot to coverage.

11:09- K4RLC gets final directions into Wake Commons, still on 52. Jose KD4JWF files a SKYWARN report on the UHF linked system.

11:26- N4TAB announces the end of the exercise, and that there will be a critique on 88 at noon.

Many stations checked in on the critique net, and many more just listened. I've already included the comments made in the minute-by-minute account above.

My final comments are that this exercise was all "fire-drill" – that is, it was all logistics on getting people on the right frequency or in the right location, or both. We carried no "client" traffic. What would we have done if Wake County Emergency Management had loaded us down with urgent messages for Durham or Orange Counties? Actually, I think we would have adapted and gotten the traffic flowing. Meanwhile, all the churning we did was valuable. People were learning a lot in a short period of time. But the real value of it will be measured in the changes we make now, and how we respond next time.

As N4TAB put it, "Next time we'll try to make a different set of mistakes."

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NEWS

**The Central Carolina
Skywarn Net Meets
Tuesdays at 9:15 PM
on 146.88 Repeater**

SKYWARN DINNER

JANUARY 30, 2005, 6:00pm, at the Golden Corral in Raleigh on Glenwood Avenue. Jeff Orrock will be speaking on winter weather.

CCSKYWARN.NET WEBSITE

There's a new look to the Central Carolina Skywarn Website. Please check out our new site with more information (www.ccskywarn.net). A thank you to Tim Nicholson W4NOT for taking on the project as webmaster. We thank John VanPelt for the work he did on the website as he assumes backup webmaster duties.

CENTRAL CAROLINA SKYWARN WINTER WEATHER PROCEDURES

The National Weather Service takes reports of precipitation types and accumulations at the end of each hour. During a winter weather event, a Skywarn net control station will briefly activate the net to collect precipitation reports from hams in the service area. The type of information that will usually be sought is: precipitation type (rain, sleet, snow), rate and accumulation. Additional details may be requested, so stations should listen carefully to the net control station. All amateurs are encouraged to participate in Skywarn activities and assist the National Weather Service as requested.

2005 Skywarn Leadership

John VanPelt (JVP) K4JVP has stepped down as Emergency Coordinator (EC) of Central Carolina Skywarn due to work load. He follows every hurricane and many storms in the midwest with Stormstudy and Hurricanetrack.com. We wish him well. He will still be AEC and continue assisting with CCSkywarn.

New EC of Central Carolina Skywarn is Denyse Walter K4DAW. AEC's are JVP K4JVP, Bob Woodson WX4MMM, and Virginia Enzor NC4VA.



EC Denyse K4DAW



AEC John K4JVP



AEC Bob WX4MMM



AEC Virginia NC4VA

TOYS FOR THE CHILDREN IN FLORIDA



Diane Tomasik, coordinator of the White Doves Project, Denyse K4DAW and Jim K4FIJ. QSL cards on the bulletin board from hams around the US.



Carts used to move and organize toys by age and gender.